

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
INFO USDEL SECRETARY
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

S E C R E T STATE 145783 TOSEC 070004

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, YS

SUBJECT: ATHERTON MEETING WITH PDRY UN AMBASSADOR

REF: STATE 144046

1. AT OUR INITIATIVE, ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON MET
IN NEW YORK JUNE 22 WITH PDRY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
ASHTAL. ATHERTON ASKED ASHTAL TO CONVEY TO HIS GOVERNMENT
THAT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH PRESIDENT'S POLICY OF SEEKING TO
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IMPROVE RELATIONS WHEREVER POSSIBLE, WE WOULD LIKE TO ENTER
INTO A HIGH-LEVEL DIALOGUE WITH A VIEW TO IMPROVING
RELATIONS WITH SOUTH YEMEN LOOKING TOWARD THE RESTORATION
OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. TO THAT END, WE PROPOSED A MEETING
OF SENIOR OFFICIALS OF OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS IN ADEN,
WASHINGTON, NEW YORK OR WHEREVER THE YEMENIS FOUND CON-
VENIENT.

2. ASHTAL NOTED THAT DURING MEETING WITH PDRY FOREIGN MINISTER IN NEW YORK DURING 1975 GENERAL ASSEMBLY, SECRETARY KISSINGER HAD INDICATED HE WOULD SEND REPRESENTATIVE TO ADEN TO DISCUSS RESUMPTION OF RELATIONS. FOR VARIOUS REASONS THIS HAD NOT WORKED OUT, AND ASHTAL SAID HE WELCOMED THIS RENEWED INITIATIVE FOR WHICH HE THOUGHT PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES WERE AUSPICIOUS. IN

RESPONSE TO ASHTAL'S QUESTION ABOUT LEVEL OF U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FOR PROPOSED MEETING, ATHERTON SAID WE HAD NOT DECIDED PRECISELY BUT IT WOULD BE A SENIOR OFFICIAL, POSSIBLY UNDER SECRETARY HABIB WHO HAD RECENTLY VISITED BAGHDAD FOR SIMILAR MISSION. ASHTAL ASKED ABOUT TIMING AND ATHERTON SAID WHENEVER IT WAS CONVENIENT FOR PDRY BUT FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW, THE SOONER THE BETTER. ASHTAL SAID HE WANTED TO INFORM US THAT THERE WOULD BE OPPORTUNITY FOR HIGH-LEVEL CONTACT THIS FALL SINCE THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PDRY PRESIDENTIAL COUNCIL, SALIM RUBAYYA ALI, WOULD BE COMING TO NEW YORK FOLLOWING A VISIT TO CUBA TO ADDRESS THE UNGA ON SEPTEMBER 29. MEANWHILE, HE WOULD CONVEY OUR SUGGESTION TO ADEN AND WAS CERTAIN HE WOULD RECEIVE AN EARLY REPLY. ASHTAL INDICATED HIS HOPE THAT TODAY'S MEETING WOULD BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL. ATHERTON SAID THIS WAS OUR INTENTION. WE ALSO WOULD TRY TO KEEP ANY HIGH-LEVEL MEETING CONFIDENTIAL IF PDRY SO WISHED BUT
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COULD NOT OF COURSE GUARANTEE IT WOULD NOT COME TO PUBLIC ATTENTION.

3. IN GENERAL DISCUSSION THAT FOLLOWED, ASHTAL NOTED RECENT PUBLICATION OF DEPARTMENT LETTER TO CONGRESS ON TERRORISM WHICH HAD MENTIONED PDRY AND SAID THIS HAD CREATED A BAD IMPRESSION WITH HIS GOVERNMENT. ATHERTON SAID WE WERE RESPONDING TO A CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRY AND HAD TO PROVIDE FACTUAL INFORMATION AS WE KNEW IT. THIS WAS THE KIND OF THING THAT COULD BE DISCUSSED PRIVATELY BETWEEN US IF WE HAD A BETTER DIALOGUE.

4. IN RESPONSE TO ATHERTON'S QUERY ABOUT PDRY RELATIONS WITH ITS NEIGHBORS, ASHTAL SAID THERE WERE MUCH IMPROVED AND CITED IN PARTICULAR SAUDI ARABIA, KUWAIT AND NORTH YEMEN. PDRY WANTED TO PURSUE ITS OWN INDEPENDENT NATIONAL POLICY AND TO FOCUS ITS EFFORTS ON INTERNAL ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. ASHTAL SAID HIS GOVERNMENT HOPED U.S. COMPANIES WOULD BECOME INTERESTED IN PDRY; HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT REESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS MIGHT ENCOURAGE SUCH INTEREST. ASHTAL THEN COMMENTED THAT SITUATION "IN OUR AREA" WAS BECOMING EXPLOSIVE. HE MADE PARTICULAR

REFERENCE TO HORN OF AFRICA AND SITUATION BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND SOMALIA. PDRY, HE SAID, HAS GOOD RELATIONS WITH BOTH AND IS TRYING QUIETLY TO BE HELPFUL. ATHERTON SAID U.S. HOPED REGIONAL PROBLEMS COULD BE RESOLVED BY REGIONAL STATES WITHOUT OUTSIDE POWER SEEKING TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SITUATION.

5. FINALLY, ATHERTON DESCRIBED BRIEFLY OUR MIDDLE EAST PEACE EFFORTS, CITING IN PARTICULAR VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE'S

RECENT SAN FRANCISCO SPEECH AND STRESSING THAT WE ARE DETERMINED TO CONTINUE TO WORK FOR JUST MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT. CHRISTOPHER

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